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THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF TAIWAN

FRIENDSHIP

友愛

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ASK, SEEK, AND KNOCK

~Bishop's Message~

This Letter was written after the Weather Bureau lifted its warning of Typhoon Sinlaku. Thank the Lord for hearing our prayers.

Dear friends, please remember the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive; and anyone who seeks will find; and the door will be opened to the one who knocks." [Matthew 7:7-8]

On September 6 the President warned the whole nation to take a day off due to Typhoon Sinlaku, heading towards Taiwan, so as to prevent a disaster similar to last year's Typhoon Nari, which paralyzed Taiwan for two days and killed about one hundred people. For the past three days many Christians prayed for the mercy of the Lord Jesus on this island.

In the beginning of July, when Typhoon Nakri threatened Taiwan, I was on a religious pilgrimage in Italy organized by the Diocese of Taiwan. I will never forget when we heard the news that heavy damage could be caused by Typhoon Nakri; a group of the tour members prayed immediately while we stood on the top of Mount Vesuvius, which destroyed the city of Pompeii in AD 79. Miraculously, Typhoon Nakri left Taiwan without any damage, but filled up the reservoirs as a gift from God. Praise the Lord!

The quotation, "I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain of wheat unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains" [John 15:24], came to mind during the trip. There are masterpieces of art everywhere in Italy, especially in the Vatican and other places in Rome. People have used their talents, gifts and even their lives to praise, thank and serve the Creator from generation to generation.

We had the chance to visit Ambassador Raymond Tai at the Embassy of the Republic of China to the Holy See. From his briefing, we all realized Ambassador Tai's concern about his nation, and recognized him as a loyal person. We pray that the Lord Jesus will be his spiritual advisor.

After returning from a trip which broadened our minds and enriched our lives, I believe each and every participant is willing to pray to the Heavenly Father: "Dear God, we experienced your holy presence and witnessed your saving deed during our trip. I will be yours; please send me on your mission. Amen."

On August 24, the Feast of Saint Bartholomew, the Reverends June YK Chou and Leo WB Tzeng were ordained as

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priests, and Messrs Daniel CJ Lee and Joseph ML Wu were ordained as deacons. In order to help the candidates understand and respond to the marvels of creation and the revelations of the Creator through nature, we selected Kuang-Tze Ling as our retreat site. The Reverends Chun-Shih Ou, Jason Ke and David Chee shared their experiences in the priesthood. Not only did they feed our souls but also our bodies; each morning we enjoyed a delicious breakfast prepared by the Reverend Ou, recently retired from Grace Church, Tainan. I would also like to thank Mr and Mrs Chin-Lang Soo for kindly letting us stay in their comfortable villa – "Garden of Chin". We all felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in inspiring and strengthening our spirits. We are sure the Spirit will guide us all throughout our ministries.

The Reverend Graham Ogden, a former colleague in the Diocese of Taiwan, was

invited to come from Melbourne, Australia to Taiwan by the Bible Association to attend meetings of the Chinese Study Bible. This group is planning to publish a Study Bible soon to help Chinese Christians understand more fully some of the background and meaning of the Scriptures. He took time to come and see me, and I was touched by his words: "the number of books sold is not important; if reading the Bible cannot help people get a new life, then publishing the commentary will be in vain."

If the Scriptures we read cannot help us repent, or introduce our relatives and friends to feel the love and mercy of God, how can we be his witnesses?

May God forgive our sins, and the Holy Spirit inspire us to be well equipped to proclaim and live out the gospel of salvation. Amen.✠

Diocesan Ordination Service

Feast of Saint Bartholomew: August 24 2002
St Timothy's Episcopal Church, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, R.O.C.



I can tell you everything that went on, but nothing that was said!

Well, not quite, but you know what I mean. Yet I felt absolutely included in the solemn joy of the ordination service in which the Reverends Leo Tseng and June Chou (deacons) were made priests under the hands of Bishop David Lai and all the clergy present, and Messrs Joseph Wu and Daniel Lee were made deacons under the hands of Bishop Lai. Not forgetting, of course, the Holy Spirit who was invoked – and proved her/his presence and power in an unmistakable manner.

Making the service even more memorable was the innovation of calling each of the newly ordained to the front at the time of the final announcements, and giving each of them the chance to speak to the congregation.

His parents and a sibling stood up with their son and brother; a husband and one daughter stood up with his wife and her mother; a wife and infant son stood up with her husband and his father; and one candidate, whose wife had recently given birth to their second child stood alone but not forlorn.



Respectively, the new priests had been:

- a full time student and seminarian;
- a wife and mother of five;
- a franchisee owning two 7-11 stores in central Taipei;
- a one-time pastor of a local non-denominational church.

Their hands-on training had been acquired under the mentoring skills of experienced clergy in St Peter's, Chiayi; St Mark's, Pingtung; Church of the Advent, Hsinpu; and Church of the Good Shepherd, Taipei, then Grace Church, Tainan. Their studies had taken place in a Presbyterian seminary; and in the lay-leadership training Trinity Centre in the Bishop's Office in Taipei.

Three of the four originated or apprenticed in the southern churches, leading to the unusual but fitting decision to hold the ordination service in the largest and newest church facility in the south, St Timothy's, Kaohsiung.

But neither the church itself nor the event is just about ordained ministry. My wife read

the Old Testament lesson in English, and a member of the Standing Committee from St John's Cathedral, Taipei read the New Testament lesson in Chinese. Choirs from St James, Taichung; Church of the Good Shepherd, Taipei; Grace Church, Tainan; and St Timothy's, Kaohsiung ministered in music, each with their own accompanist; while congregational singing was enriched by the accomplished parish church organist.

Not to be outdone, Father Richard Ou operated with panache behind his mouth-wateringly desirable Contax and Hasselblad cameras to record the event for posterity. And then we ascended from the worship space, occupying the third and fourth floors of the tower block, to the fifth floor for a wonderful feast. The food was excellent, the service impeccable, and the energy and cheerfulness of the young people in clearing up and shifting tables and chairs was heart-warming to behold.

It was a treat to have present retired Bishop John Chien and his wife Grace, now living in

retirement in Chiayi, and looking as though retirement really suits them! Present, too, was Father Robert Martin, CMP (Company of Mission Priests), visiting Taiwan from the Diocese of London, U.K., for a rigorous Chinese language course and the chance to visit clergy and congregations in parts of the island.

Although no one near me could translate the Bishop's sermon at the time he was preaching, someone did translate for me

how the Reverend June Chou had prayed daily for thirty years for her husband to come to faith in Christ; and how he, Captain Yang, Merchant Marine, wished he had come to faith earlier in his life. That is so demonstrative of the faithfulness of one church member and wife, so encouraging to us all, and so evocative of God's grace. God's Redeeming Arms Circle Everyone. is the redemptive gospel.✠

Rev'd Graham Witcher, Ph.D.
English Chaplain, Church of the Good Shepherd.



Warm welcome received by Diocesan delegation in visit to Diocese of Taiwan

-by Margaret Cornish

What a great privilege it is to travel halfway around the world and experience a warm and very gracious welcome because you are church family.

Four members from this diocese went to Taiwan in March and experienced this wonderful reception and they spent two weeks last month visiting parishes, mission stations, and places of community ministry in this Asian country.

The diocesan delegation included the Rev. Sheila Flynn, the chair of the Diocesan Cross Cultural Unit, Barbara Corbett, and Vera Askew, all from St. Bartholomew, Gibson; and the Rev. Margaret Cornish of Christ Church Cathedral, chair of Partners in Mission.

Our diocese has been formally partnered with the Episcopal Diocese of Taiwan since Synod 2000, and one of the purposes for our visit was to strengthen the bond between the two dioceses and between twinned parishes. We learned and shared

much, and have come back with many suggestions and ideas for a deep and rich companionship experience.

Almost all the parishes and mission stations in Taiwan run pre-school kindergartens for two to five year olds. There are usually about 100 to 300 children in each church kindergarten and the priests are kept very busy running these schools. They are always looking for English teachers.

We were amazed at how very engaged Taiwanese parishes are with outreach programs. Some of the community projects include: the SOS Children's Village in Jingli, the Eden Home for the Disabled in Keelung, and the 'Green Pastures' Senior's Community Centre in Shihiin, Taipei.

Of the programs and activities listed in churches, some that caught my eye (apart from many catechism and Bible Study-type classes) were: 'Mother's English Story Reading', 'Life Sharing and Relationship Building', 'Communication for Husbands

and Wives', 'Faith Formation of Children' and 'Family Sing-Along'. Some parishes have programs where professional musicians come to the church and teach young people instruments and musical education.

In a country new to you, you keep your eyes focused and your ears open. You really pay attention. This attention reveals extraordinary beauty and mystery. We saw paintings of Christ as Chinese. We heard in Taiwanese the Word that stirs life and is life, because it is God's Word.

We smelled the fragrance of joss sticks, and saw it rise up as prayer. We felt a grace that welled up out of the connection of families of faith on other sides of the world from each other. And we knew that through this connection the church could gain fresh insight and that we might find -

together - some creative responses to the challenges of our times.

It was life-giving to experience God in the human story, hope and struggle that is Taiwanese culture and story. God is involved with the whole world. Our pilgrimage, as Christians, must be to move toward wholeness in companionship with others of God's world.

Sometimes we glimpsed God's purpose fleetingly, like a heron taking flight over a rice paddy. But we knew that God is with us on our journey. And we recognized the sacredness of our journey together as a family of faith. Many thanks to the Stewards in Action Committee for support and encouragement.✚

TEACHING ENGLISH IS FUN

Jocelyn Parr led a team of four youth and a second adult, all from our companion Diocese, New Westminster, BC, Canada on a three week adventure in July, teaching English at a summer school in St John's and St Mary's Institute of Technology, Hsinpu, and visiting various churches around the island. She wrote:



English to Taiwanese students, got used to chopsticks, and fell in love with the musical garbage trucks! ...however, it was by far, the hospitality and generosity of the people we met that astounded us the most.... I think all six of us count ourselves very lucky to have made the trip to Taiwan, and can't wait until we can play the hosts next summer."

"It's been over a month since we returned from Taiwan, but when the six of us got together just last night, it seemed like no time had passed...we were both incredibly blessed and challenged, and led to incredible growth as individuals and as a group, over the three weeks in Taiwan..... we adjusted to the time change, learnt to teach

Patricia Appavoo, the second adult mentor on the trip added the following comments:

"Not having much experience working with teens I was somewhat apprehensive about my role on the tour. ...I need not have worried - with the goodwill of the tour leader, Jocelyn Parr and the young pilgrims I had a great time....we were somewhat surprised

to discover that our youth were each to be? classroom tutors for groups of ten students and that their contract in those classes was for one hour, three times a day.....it was with a great sense of pride that I watched our young pilgrim take on the challenge of tutoring – their experience is on the receiving, not transmitting end, but they put their hearts and minds into this activity and did an excellent job...

they became good friends with many of the campers (aged 10 – 20) and convinced the leaders of the camp that learning can be fun, and playing games is a good way to learn another language. ...after the camp we were on the road for ten days visiting various churches.

In St James' Taichung we attended the kindergarten ceremonies of 120 children, and our group sang two kindergarten songs from Canada;

in Tainan and Kaohsiung we visited churches and kindergartens, and met young people;

and on our last Sunday in St Timothy's, Kaohsiung, we sang "Lord Jesus, of you I will sing as I journey" in English, and to our delight the congregation joined us and sang the last verse with us.

we returned to Taipei and were entertained for a day and a half by Bishop David and Lily Lai...the concept of twinning Dioceses and parishes took on a tangible meaning for all of us." ✚

NOAH'S ENJOY THEIR RAINBOW AT "ADVENT"

Ron and Toni Noah (Toni served as the English secretary to both Bishops John Chien and David Lai) lived on campus at St John's and St Mary's Institute of Technology, Hsinpu, where they taught English, and worshipped at Church of the Advent. On the last Sunday before returning to Charles City, Iowa, USA they gave a farewell speech to the congregation.

Two years ago we stood here when you welcomed us to Advent Church and told you how sorry we were that we couldn't speak to you in Chinese. We told you that we hoped someday to be able to.

Today we are here to say good-bye, and we still can't talk to you as we would like to. All we can tell you that we will keep trying. Maybe when we come back to visit we will be able to surprise you all and be totally fluent in Chinese.

30 years ago we lived in Malaysia and thought of it as the best 2 years of our lives. We left Asia then because we wanted our children to have a chance to grow up in their own country. But we promised ourselves that we would go again to live in another country when our children were through school and were on their own.

When we applied to become missionaries with the Episcopal Church, we thought we would be going to live in Africa. They had work there that seemed to be exactly what we were trained and experienced to do. It turned out that wasn't what either God or the Episcopal Church had in mind for us. Every thing seemed to keep drawing us to make the decision to come to Taiwan.

We are here because we were lucky enough to listen to our hearts tell us this was where we should be for two years.

You have taught us a lot while we have been here. One of the things that is going to be most difficult to leave behind when we go back to America is the commitment you have to God and to each other. When I walked in the door of Advent Church for the

first time, I felt the love and joy that all of you share. I still have that feeling every Sunday.

When I hear the singing at Advent, whether it is the Sunday School children, the youth choir, the regular choir, members of the congregation individually singing in praise of God, or all of us singing hymns together, I feel that our church is a special place to be, because it has a special place in all your lives. This church is a place to live and be. It is an important part of the lives of its members – not just a building to drop in on for an hour on Sunday morning.

Another thing that will be difficult for me to leave is the way this church follows the teaching of accepting "all sorts and conditions" of people. There is room at Advent, and room in your hearts, for so many different kinds of people. You take quite seriously the tradition of hospitality for which Taiwan is famous, and blend it with the Biblical instruction to love your neighbor as yourself. I hope to carry back with me the openness that makes it possible for all of us in this parish to worship and share as brothers and sisters, instead of always looking for ways to make church members as homogeneous a group as possible.

Two years ago, on our way to Taiwan from our home in the state of Iowa, we stopped for a few days, in Denver, Colorado to observe part of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. While we were there we heard Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold give a sermon in which he said the most important thing to remember is that God loves you.

He passed out bookmarks with a portion of Mark 1:11 written on them, "You are my beloved...with you I am well pleased." As

we all know, this was what the voice of God said as Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. According to Presiding Bishop Griswold these words apply to us all.

He said it is not necessary to be perfect. No one can be. God loves us as we are.

It is not hard to understand what it is like to be imperfect, we all are. What is important to understand is that it is not necessary to be perfect to be loved by God. Sometimes that is hard. How can God love us even, or especially, when we know how imperfect we really are? The message of our faith is that God's love is unconditional.

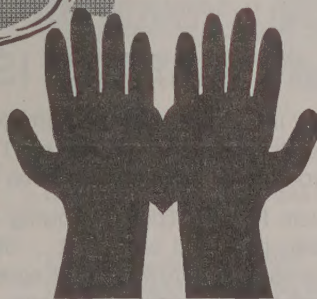
In the popular culture in US there is a belief that you only get what you deserve, and to deserve something you must earn it. People often say "There is no free lunch." Unconditional love doesn't fit into that culture.

Since coming to Advent Church we have begun to develop a clearer vision. It is possible to receive without earning. We have been the

recipients of unconditional gifts and love from you in this church and the Diocese of Taiwan since the day we arrived. We have been given lodging, food, furniture, and medicine when we were sick. We have been accepted into homes and groups, and asked to participate in many ways, just because we are here - not because we did anything to earn this kindness.

We are thankful, not only for your gifts and love, but also for what they have taught us about God's unconditional love of us all.

Right now, we have less than a week left in



Taiwan. It would take us all of that time if we were going to start a list of all the thanks that we owe to all of you for making us a part of your family for these two years.

You have not only made us part of your family, you have been our family. You have been our Christmas and our Easter, and our birthday and our 4th of July. You have made us strong in the confidence of God's love, and you have helped us to comprehend the unconditional nature of acceptance. Through you we have been able to see a small corner of the eternal family we all share through Jesus.

For many years I have been troubled by the several passages in the Gospels, one of which we read just a couple of weeks ago, where Jesus tells the disciples that, to follow

him, it is necessary to leave your family. This always seemed to me to be an almost impossible step to take. Now, it doesn't seem as harsh or scary to us because we know that we are part of a much bigger family, that we will never leave and, god-willing, will continue to grow and spread the word.

Let us pray.

Everliving God, hear our prayer for this parish family. Give strength to the faithful, arouse those who no longer care, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your Holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.✙

SHARING FAITH IS FUNDAMENTAL

Rosie Walker, in Taiwan with the Church Missionary Society, went on the 'Make a Difference' program from St James, Taichung to Holy Trinity, Keelung. The following excerpts are from her report on the experience.

"In July I went to Holy Trinity, knowing I had three students in the children's class, no teenagers and one adult.... the Reverend Lily Chang and I prayed that our classes might grow, and we agreed that I would tell the students about Jesus as well as the English language....the children's class grew to 12, the teenagers to five, and the adults to three.... the children got really good at singing Jesus' love is very wonderful, and Who's the king of the jungle? the teenagers, Reverend Lily and I went to the Episcopal Diocese of Taiwan youth camp in Hualien, where I shared with about 80 youngsters my testimony.... on returning from Taroko Gorge (marble cliffs, turquoise river – nowhere else on earth like it!) we took our teenagers to a Christian concert and they all stood up at the end and gave their lives to Jesus....the adult class had two Christians, both young adults, and we got on well together... I helped advise them on the perils of Mormonism, since one of the adults had been invited to a Mormon event....I feel very honored to have served with Reverend Lily and the congregation of Holy Trinity. ...it was a time of blessing, and my prayers are for God to continue blessing priest and people there. Amen." ✙

To commemorate the tragedy of September 11, 2001.

A prayer request from the
Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold :

"God, the compassionate One, whose loving care extends to all the world, we remember this day your children of many nations and many faiths whose lives were cut short by the fierce flames of anger and hatred. Console those who continue to suffer and grieve, and give them comfort and hope as they look to the future. Out of what we have endured, give us the grace to examine our relationships with those who perceive us as the enemy, and show our leaders the way to use our power to serve the good of all for the healing of the nations. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord who, in reconciling love, was lifted up from the earth that he might draw all things to himself. Amen" ✠

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Let there be light,
let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather,
let them be face to face.

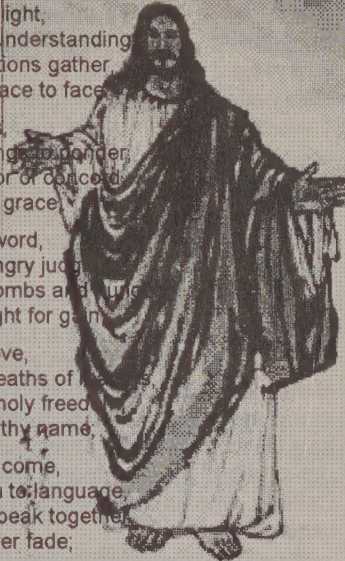
open our lips,
open our minds to wonder,
open the door of darkness,
opening into grace.

perish the sword,
perish the angry judgment,
perish the bombs and the fire,
perish the fight for gain.

hallow our love,
hallow the deaths of the just,
hallow their holy freedom,
hallowed be thy name.

thy kingdom come,
thy spirit turn to language,
thy people speak together,
thy spirit never fade;

let there be light,
open our hearts to wonder,
perish the way of terror,
hallow the world God made.



Frances Wheeler Davis (1936 -)
Common Praise - Hymnal of the Anglican Church of
Canada [Anglican Book Centre: Toronto, CAN] 1998

EDITOR'S NOTE

The President of SJSMT, Dr Andy Chang, will spend this academic year as a Visiting Scholar at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. He hopes to establish a course in Business Ethics in Taiwan on his return. ✠

CHURCHES THAT RAN THE GOOD RACE DEMONSTRATED GOOD GRACE

Saturday June 1 (your scribe's birthday) was a red letter day in the annals of the Christian Church in Taiwan. Always and everywhere, regardless of denominational label and worship preferences, Christians in Taiwan are outnumbered; more by the non-believers than by believers in other faiths. But on this day, as the brainwave of Bishop David Lai, about two hundred youth and adults turned up at St John's and St Mary's Institute of Technology at Hsinpu for the inaugural ecumenical sports day.

The gymnasium featured a tug of war rope reminiscent of a ship's hawser, which chafed the hands of the contestants; a demoralized beefy all-male team of aboriginals fell forwards in disarray, out-muscled or out-smarted by a women's team from the College, who steadily walked backwards to victory.

[By the way, in what other sport are the winners traveling backwards?] As well, the basketball courts echoed with squeaking sneakers and the thump of the ball. Elsewhere table tennis (ping pong being a Chinese nomenclature) was in furious pro-

gress.

Outdoors, various teams faced each other in slo-pitch matches. And fun events at the close of the day included three-legged races, a sack-hopping race, and a relay race around the quarter mile track. Trophies had been purchased by the Diocese of Taiwan, and were given to individual participants and teams. The teams had come from high schools and congregations of northern Taiwan: Roman Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Episcopalian. The Bishop, who had pitched throughout and batted as necessary for the Episcopalian team, brought the proceedings to a close with a heartfelt prayer for God to bless us, and use us in blessing others.

One hopes that this will become an annual event, maybe even to include people of other faith groups. The day was marked by good clean fun, healthy exercise, friendly competition, mutual welcome. If this were a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, then the circle must be drawn ever wider.....✙

Graham Witcher

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD: ENGLISH CHAPLAIN RETIREMENT

Sunday October 27 marks the last Sunday at Church of the Good Shepherd of the Reverend Doctor Graham Witcher. After an Australia/New Zealand vacation, he and his wife Valerie are leaving Taiwan on November 20, in time to make the fourth birthday party of their eldest grandson, Aidan. Timing is everything. Our imaginary early retirement in Canada, July 2000 enabled us to spend two years in Taiwan, and how we

thank God daily for the opportunity. We have made friends for life. Our faith has been invigorated. We have tried and (as photos prove) enjoyed new foods. And we have had fun. Thank you to Bishops John Chien (Grace) and David Lai (Lily); the search committee, rector and assistant, wardens, vestry and congregation(s) at Church of the Good Shepherd; clergy colleagues and church members from around

the island; and the many first-time visitors and returning former-members encountered in this unique and busy parish.

In my mind's eye I have often imagined this inscription on my tombstone:

From the beginning he spoke well: By the end he listened well.

Being tongue-tied in Chinese for two years was God's way of calling my bluff! ✚

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD: ENGLISH CHAPLAIN REPLACEMENT

As readers of this newsletter will know, in both the USA and Canada, Anglican/Episcopalians and Lutherans have entered a covenant to recognize and share ministries. One of the first fruits of this development is that a Lutheran pastor has been appointed at Good Shepherd. He is the Reverend Philip Stringer, who with his wife Patty and daughters Margaret and Rachel will take up residence and responsibilities on November 1 2002.

Philip has a BS in Science and Humanities

(Valparaiso) and an M Div from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. He was an intern in Florida, a pastor in Indiana and most recently Pastor, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Glen Ellyn [Chicago] Illinois. His parallel activities have included high school visiting pastor, police chaplaincy, short term missionary to Jamaica and volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.

If the experiences of Philip and his family come anywhere close to those of Valerie and myself, they will be overwhelmed with hospitality and generosity. ✚

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The comedian Robin Williams is an Episcopalian Recently he gave
THE TOP TEN REASONS FOR BEING AN EPISCOPALIAN

10. No snake handling
9. You can believe in dinosaurs
8. Male and female God created them, male and female we ordain them
7. You don't have to check your brains at the door
6. Pew aerobics
5. Church year is color-coded
4. Free wine on Sunday
3. All of the pageantry - none of the guilt
2. You don't have to know how to swim to be baptized and the Number
One reason for being an Episcopalian
1. No matter what you believe, there's bound to be at least one other
Episcopalian who agrees with you.



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The Episcopal
Diocese of Taiwan

The Rt. Rev. David Lai,
Bishop

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Several articles in this issue of *Friendship* are on the general theme of comings and goings. Four Canadian women visited Taiwan in February; four Canadian youth with two adults visited Taiwan in July; two Volunteers in Mission returned to the United States at the end of a two year assignment; an interim worker with the Church

Missionary Society based in Taichung spent a month in Keelung; the retiring English Chaplain at Good Shepherd is

returning to Canada as his successor is arriving from the United States. Constant in all these comings and goings is

the worship, work and witness of the Episcopal Church in Taiwan which has offered all incoming visitors a mixture of hospitality and generosity; the joy of sharing in vibrant worship and evangelism; and the opportunity of witnessing innovative and effective

social ministries. Graham Witcher is quietly proud of serving as Editor for this Edition of *Friendship*. ✚

